

Nov. 10, 1964

~~SECRET~~*Source: Project Aerodynamic*

The meeting took place Nov. 9, 1964 in the international house of Columbia University at 5:30 P.M. The meeting was arranged the same day on the telephone. At 4: 5:30 the subject was waiting for me in the lobby, he signed me in as a guest and we went into the living room of the I. house. There we sat down and I started to ask him about the exchange program.

1. I asked the subject if he applied to be a exchange student or was he selected by his government to go to school in the U.S. M. said th at he applied to study in the U.S. and was granted permission by the American and Soviet govt. He said that as a student of economy he was very fortunate to study in the U.S. I asked him how he would compare Columbia University to Erevan (his home university) He said d that Columbia is a much bigger school and that is a big experiance to study here. I asked him what he tought of the U.S. M. said that he has been here only two months and cannot make up his mind about the country yet. He said that there are good and bad points but that after six months he will be able to tell me more of his impressions of America. I asked him if he wanted to bring his wife and children over to show them the country, he said that he had never thought of it but he added that his children are to small to see the difference in America and that it do them no good to show them America.

2. I asked him about the food in America and how it compares to the USSR he said that the fo od in America is very good but the prices are very high. I asked him about living quarters in the U.S. and if he had seen any. He said that he was invited to the homes of Armenian families living in the states and said that their apartments are not exceptional and that the rent is too much. He said that in the USSR the rent is very low and that there is a problem of housing only because all the people want an apartment for free. He said that if they ware to resort to American methods it would not solve the problem.

3. I asked him about his ambition after he leaves the U.S. what he plans to do in the USSR. He said that he plans to teach in Erevan University, right now he is a aspirant he will try to become a candidate, I asked him about his courses of study, he said that he is studying American labor unions, and the relations of labor to management. I asked ab- out text books, he said that they cost too much money and he cannot afford to buy as many

1. *Only 1 B.R. of U.S.* ~~SECRET~~

10 Nov 1964

Res 74-124-501

as he wants. I asked him how much money he receives a month from the govt, he said 170 \$
I asked him if this was enough, he said not at all, in the USSR the students receive 110 rubl
per month and that this was very good and lasted them for all their books and other expen-
ces. He said that books in the USSR cost much less than in the U.S. and that after a
school year a student returning home from the USSR can bring back a library. I said that
in the U.S. a person can buy good used books or very good paperbacks., very cheap. He
asked me what I plan to do when I finish college, I said that I plan to teach Soviet histo-
ry. He said that I have to visit the USSR and see the country first hand. I said that this
is one of my ambitions and that some day I want to study in Kiev. M. said that Kiev is
a very beautiful city and that it reminds him very much of Erevan.

4. I asked him what he thought of the changes in the Govt. of the USSR, he said that the
changes were for the better, and he believes that the new govt. will work for peace. I
asked him why Khrushchev was deposed of power. M. said that because of his internal pol-
icies, I asked him to elaborate on this statement, he said that his handling of the
agricultural, and industrial problems were not what they were supposed to be. I asked him
about the attack on Khrushchev in Pravda, he said that this was true, Khrushchev took on too
many problems without being capable to handle them. I asked M. about the place of K.
in the history of the USSR, I said that in my readings on Soviet History Khrushchev was
credited with the liberation of Kiev from the Germans. I said that in the latest issues
of Soviet Ukrainian newspapers where there was a celebration of the liberation of Ukraine
from Germany Khrushchev's name was not even mentioned. I asked him for an explanation. He
said that this was one of the mistakes of Khrushchev. M. said that K. was not really
responsible for the liberation of Kiev, but that he twisted history around. I asked him
if this was a form of a personality cult of Khrushchev. He was very vague on the answer,
and said that Khrushchev could not be compared to Stalin. I asked him if there was any
guarantee that the same thing would not happen again during the regime of Brezhnev and
Kosygin. M. said that this was impossible because with Leninist collective leadership
the formation of a personality cult is impossible. I asked him about the beginning of
Khrushchev's leadership and said that there was also an attempt to install collective

SECRET

ganin and took all the power in his own hands. M. said that this time there was an anti-party group in the leadership that wanted to use Stalinist methods in governing the USSR. I asked him what happened to them, M. said that they are alive, and living better than I am right now. I asked him about the whereabouts of Khrushchev now and he said that he does not know.

5. I asked him about the role of the Russian people in the USSR, and what the term - Soviet people meant, and is it identical with Russian. He said that it is not identical at all, the Soviet Union is formed of 14 brother republics each one equal to the other. I told him that some of my friends were in Kiev this past summer and said that the predominant language spoken is Russian. M. seemed to get mad at this and said that my friends were lying. I told him that my friends had no reason to lie, they wanted to see and hear people speak Ukrainian and were disappointed. M. did not answer to this. He said that right now in the USSR the leader of the party is a Ukrainian, and that most of the members of the presidium were Ukrainians. I told him that this is not true, he did not argue with me on this point. M. said that Mikoyan is Armenian and that his sons married Armenian girls, but he was also a Soviet citizen.

After these talks I asked him if he had eaten, he said no and we went into the cafeteria and ordered dinner.

6. At dinner I met a student from Czechoslovakia his name was Andriy, he was from Bratislava, studying Business, A. spoke Russian, and said that he understood Ukrainian, but could not speak it. At the table M. and A. spoke about their weekend, M. said that last weekend he was at the Soviet embassy to celebrate the October revolution, he said that on Saturday they had a party. I started to talk to A. and asked him about life in Czechoslovakia. He said that he wants to teach business when he returns. He said that in a Communist society American methods can be used. A. asked me if I ever heard of Bohdan Khmelnytsky I said yes, he asked me what I thought of him, I told him that I know about Khmelnytsky, from history, I said that Khmel. signed the Pereaslavsky treaty with Russia, and made, Ukraine a part of Russia, but I said that this treaty, cannot be held as excuse for

~~SECRET~~

calling Ukraine a part of Russia,, I said that a military treaty, never binds a nation to become a part of another nation. Neither A. nor M. had any comment. I asked A. what he thought of the change in the Kremlin. He said that he considered the changes for the better, but said that Khrushchev visited Czechoslovakia not too long ago, and that there is much emotional attachment to Khrushchev, and he cannot say what the people will think of the changes. During the conversation, A. seemed not at ease with the presence of M. I asked A. how come he came to the U.S. to study, he said that he wanted to study in the USSR, but was not accepted, he commented that it was easier to study in the U.S. than in the USSR. M. asked me why the Russian Institute in Columbia University, is called the Russian Institute, and not the Institute for Soviet Union Studies. I told him that I don't know, I said that it is the main fault in the USSR that because of the policy of drawing together of nations, which is another name for Russification, such mistakes are made. I said that if the USSR tried to convince the west that it is a Union, and not say that it is Russia, the misconceptions would change. M. started to argue that the fault lies in the west, and the USSR cannot change this situation, I said that the deliberate policy of Russification in the Ukraine is very evident, I mentioned the fact that in the bigger cities, there are newspapers in Russian and Ukrainian, and that usually the circulation of the Russian paper is greater. M. did not answer this, he said that the Russian language is the language that unites all the republics into a Soviet Union, and that it is very practical to be able to go to Armenia, for a Russian and to be able to understand other people. I said that this does not excuse the policy of Russification. At this point we finished eating and went upstairs in the lobby. I promised M. that I would find him some good books on labor, and a few booklets and give them to him soon, he was very pleased and we parted.

~~SECRET~~